SUBSTANCE OF INTERVIEW

On December 12, 2006, Applicant's representative, David G. Jankowski, conducted a telephone interview with Examiner Gortayo and Primary Examiner Debbie Le to discuss the bases for rejection. Applicant's representative would like to thank the Examiners for the courtesy they extended during the telephone interview.

During the interview, Applicant's representative asserted that the rejections in the latest Office Action are each improper at least because the applied references, individually or collectively, do not teach or suggest each limitation of the independent claims. Regarding Claim 11, Applicant's representative observed that the applied reference (Ford) does not disclose "dividing said total amount of credit by the number of ancestor nodes of the selected item to determine an amount of credit per ancestor to be distributed for the selection event," as required by Claim 11. No agreement was reached.

Regarding Claim 1, Applicant's representative observed that the applied reference (Herz) does not disclose "evaluating differences between the individual user history scores and the collective user history scores to generate a relative preference profile for the user, wherein the relative preference profile comprises relative preference scores for specific item categories, said relative preference scores reflecting a degree to which the user's predicted affinity for a category differs from the predicted affinity of the user population for that category," as required by Claim 1. At the interview the Examiners cited to additional portions in Herz to support the rejection, including col. 19, ll. 49-55, col. 70, ll. 6-9, and col. 74, ll. 48-51. No agreement was reached.

The Examiners asserted that a restriction requirement was appropriate. No election was made during the interview. Applicant's representative indicated that the Applicant would make an election, as appropriate, in response to a formal written restriction requirement in an Office Action.